



PENINSULA RAIL TASK FORCE

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For immediate release

The Peninsula Rail Task Force welcomes Rail Minister Jo Johnson on Cornwall visit

The Peninsula Rail Task Force (PRTF) were pleased to welcome the Transport Minister Jo Johnson to Truro, Cornwall on Thursday 12th July as they discussed priorities for rail infrastructure investment in the South West.

The minister reiterated the Government's continued commitment to improving the rail network for passengers in the South West. During the meeting with the PRTF he welcomed the news that Network Rail was ready to launch the next phase of key resilience work on the route between Teignmouth and Dawlish, as design studies by engineers neared completion.

The Government provided £15 million in funding after storms in 2014 damaged the line between Teignmouth and Dawlish. This enabled engineers to investigate long-term solutions that would protect the line in adverse weather.

Chair of the Peninsula Rail Task Force, Councillor Geoff Brown said: "I'm really pleased we had the opportunity to meet the Minister, and relived that he has confirmed the plan for Dawlish.

"I'm convinced that the Government is taking Dawlish seriously after our efforts to press for more detail. The Secretary of State, Chris Grayling also said exactly the same: it is the number one priority. So, we look forward to seeing the funding, to do the work as soon as the design study work is complete."

"We have also raised the importance of improving WiFi and connectivity on the route from Penzance to London because even when you take reduce journey times, it still is a long journey. If you have the ability to work on the train productively with good connectivity it is attractive to businesses and visitors travelling to the south west."

Jo Johnson said: "We are investing in the biggest modernisation of the Great Western Railway since Brunel built it more than 150 years ago, giving passengers what they want: faster, more frequent and more comfortable services.

"But it is vital we find a permanent solution to the problems at Dawlish because it is a crucial link for the people and the economy of the South West.

"With funding from government, world-leading engineers have been carrying out detailed ground investigation to understand what is happening to the cliffs and coastline in 3 key areas around Dawlish and Teignmouth. These comprehensive studies are nearing completion, enabling Network Rail to show later this year how they will take the next steps to protect the railway line and coastline."

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Notes to Editors:

You can find out more information at: www.peninsularailtaskforce.co.uk or by contacting Coast Communications on 01579 352600 or info@peninsularailtaskforce.co.uk.

The Peninsula Rail Task Force is a rail improvement campaign group comprising Cornwall Council, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP, Devon County Council, Heart of the South West LEP, Plymouth City Council, Somerset County Council and Torbay Council.